



**AMERICAN
KENNEL CLUBSM**

Scent Work

Suggested Best Practices for the Well-Being of Dog Sport Participants

The AKC supports each club's informed decision to reschedule, postpone or cancel their respective events, as well as supporting clubs ready to hold events in locations that are open and permit gatherings. As events resume across the country, people need to feel safe while enjoying their dog activities. The AKC urges clubs to take appropriate precautions for the benefit of their participants. Events need to be held in a manner that emphasizes the safety of participants and event officials over efficiency.

The following is a list of suggested best practices that may be helpful when planning or attending an event. Event locations, facilities and dates will differ. With a situation that is continually evolving, it is up to the clubs to determine the guidelines that best fit their event. In order to inform participants, specific guidelines established by the club should be published in the premium, club website and posted on signage/flyers at their event.

General Practices

1. Clubs, officials and participants are required to follow State and local guidelines that apply to the area where the event is held.
2. Practice social distancing consistent with current guidelines. Avoid congregating to the extent possible.
3. Consider wearing masks when in close proximity to others. Clubs should provide masks if desired for officials, judges and volunteers.
4. Consider wearing disposable or washable gloves.
5. Have plenty of hand sanitizers placed for people to use.
6. Wash hands as frequently as possible. Have disinfecting spray at bathroom facilities for people to spray door handles (or anything else they touch).
7. If you utilize portable toilets, please ask for a hand washing station to be delivered as well.
8. Avoid shaking hands or hugging.
9. Avoid touching dogs that are not your responsibility.
10. Avoid common use pens/pencils – bring your own.
11. Disinfect surfaces in common use areas as often as possible (tables, chairs, doorknobs, etc.) Clubs and facilities may consider not providing chairs.

12. Meals – No potlucks. Avoid or stagger group lunches/dinners if possible. It is recommended that club supply boxed lunches for judges and volunteers. Hospitality areas should avoid community items such as salt and pepper shakers, condiments, creamers, etc. Participants should consider bringing their own lunches/drinks.
13. Parking areas – Park with increased distance between vehicles if possible. This is especially critical if handlers are required to crate from their vehicles.

Event Officials Practices

1. Trial Secretary – Wear gloves while handling paperwork.
2. If allowing move-ups, ask that requests be text messaged to the Secretary 30 minutes (or longer) prior to opening of the trial. A confirmation text message should be sent to handlers.
3. Judge's clipboards should be wiped down before Secretary sets up and after they are returned to secretary.
4. Assign a single person to act as a helper/runner for the Secretary. This will minimize the number of people handling the paperwork.
5. Container searches – In order to reduce the number of people in the search area, the Table Steward would handle hot boxes and the judge can handle cold boxes, both wearing gloves. Sanitize gloves between exhibitors.
6. Timing - To minimize the number of people in the search area, Judges could time the search themselves or have the Table Steward time the search.
7. Qualifying Ribbons - Table stewards (aka judge's helper) should wear gloves and hand out the qualifying ribbon following the completion of each qualifying dog's performance. Or ribbon can be placed by the exit for participant to pick up.
8. Placements – Secretary should label placement and title ribbons and lay them out on table in an open area. Upon announcements, handlers can pick up their own ribbons. No handshakes.

Event Practices

1. If possible, staging area should be in parking lot from exhibitors' vehicles rather than inside building. From this area participants wait to be called for their run.
2. Scent Work trials structure - To minimize large group gatherings, schedule judging elements in time blocks ex: Container N- M from 8am – 10am, Exterior 12pm – 2pm.
3. Use SignUp Genius (free downloadable app) to create groups of dogs for assigned run times.
4. Check in - Steward's board will be posted behind barrier and exhibitors will tell steward who to check in so board can be updated.
5. Use Remind (free downloadable app) to communicate to participants when their specific group is to line up, confirming move-ups, any delays, winners, etc.

6. Handler's Briefing - Participants should social distance themselves a minimum of 6 feet apart or judges may provide individual briefing as dogs approach start line.
7. Social Distancing - Put cones or tape lines at a minimum of 10 ft intervals at the gate area where teams line up to run. People stay at their cone until the dog in front of them moves up. It is suggested there be no more than three dogs in line at a time.
8. Handlers should keep their dog's leash during off leash searches. They should not hand to an official or put on the floor.
9. Spectator area – If area is small, clubs should consider eliminating or limit spectators.
10. Scented articles of the handler in the Handler Discrimination Division should be placed in a sealed plastic bag and handled with gloves.
11. To reduce congregating, results can be posted on one of the apps, texted or posted in an open area.

Policies that Have Been Temporarily Suspended/Modified

1. Event Application Late Fees – Event application late fees are waived through the end of October. This provide clubs more flexibility in planning or rescheduling their events.
2. For events cancelled in 2020, AKC will apply Event Application fees to the club's next event of the same type.

Participants are expected to follow state, local government, facility and event guidelines. Clubs should be prepared to enforce the guidelines that apply to their event.

These Suggested Best Practices may be periodically updated. Please check the AKC Scent Work website (www.akc.org/sports/akc-scent-work/) for the most up-to-date version.

CDC - How to Protect Yourself and Others:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html>

For questions or additional suggestions, please contact the Performance Events Department at scentwork@akc.org.

Stay Safe – Enjoy Your Dogs

